



in God's hands

St Ignatius Primary School Social Media Policy

Policy Originator	St Ignatius Primary School
Governor Responsible	Lourdes Keever
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Signed	

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1. Introduction

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many people. We recognise that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits to be reaped. This gives clarity to the way in which social media/mobile phones are to be used by pupils, governors, visitors, parent helpers and school staff at St Ignatius School. It will also provide guidance for parents.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies

- Online safety policy and acceptable use agreements
- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- Anti bullying policy
- Behaviour policy

There are four key areas:

- The use of social networking sites by pupils within school
- Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity
- Comments posted by parents/carers
- Dealing with incidents of online bullying

2. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school

The school's acceptable use agreements outline the rules for using IT in school and these rules therefore apply to use of social networking sites. Such sites should not be used/accessed in school unless under the direction of a teacher and for a purpose clearly apparent from the learning objective of the relevant learning experience. If social media sites are used then staff should carry out a risk assessment to determine which tools are appropriate. Social Media sites to be used in school include blogging sites and Twitter. Parents will give permission for children to access these sites in school as well as permission for images of their child / child's work to be included on the site. (See e-safety agreement form: parents – online safety policy)

In terms of private use of social networking sites by a child it is generally understood that children under the age of 13 are not permitted to be registered, including Facebook and Instagram to name two. This information is communicated to parents during internet safety workshops. Parents will also be able to receive guidance and advice on how to keep their children safe online during these workshops.

Guidance/protection for Pupils on using social networking:

- No pupil may access social networking sites during the school working day.
- All pupil mobile phones must be handed into the class teacher at the beginning of the school day. They will be returned @ 3:15pm.
- No school computers are to be used to access social networking sites at any time of day unless for direct school use (posting school information onto the school website/twitter page).
- It should be made clear to pupils that most social media sites should not be for pupils under 13 years of age.
- Children will be taught about the dangers of Cyber bullying during whole school focus days (Internet safety day/Anti-Bullying week). There will be regular opportunities for KS2 children to find out about how to keep safe online (SMART rules) with targeted lessons/assemblies/workshops.
- Any pupil who attempts to breach firewalls will result in being given a ban from using school ICT equipment other than with close supervision.
- Pupils must report any improper contact or cyber bullying to the class teacher in confidence as soon as it happens.
- The school has a zero tolerance to cyber bullying.

3. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity

It is possible that a high proportion of staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them to protect their professional reputation by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

Guidelines are issued to staff:

- Staff must **never** add pupils as 'friends' into their personal accounts (including past pupils under the age of 16).
 - Staff are **strongly advised** not to add parents as 'friends' into their personal accounts.
 - Staff **must not** post comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including members of the governing body.
 - Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times (for personal use).
 - Staff should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current national teacher's standards.
 - Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
 - Staff should read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People' (Safer Recruitment Consortium).
 - Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Head teacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.
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4. Comments posted by parents/carers

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of school communication include; the prospectus, the website, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion. School policies and documents provide further information regarding appropriate channels of communication and means of resolving differences of opinion. Effective communication following principles of mutual respect is the best means of ensuring the best learning experiences for the child.

Parents must not post pictures of pupils, other than their own children, on social networking sites where these photographs have been taken at a school event.

Parents should make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites.

Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.

5. Dealing with incidents of online bullying/inappropriate use of social networking sites

The school's anti-bullying policy sets out the processes and sanctions regarding any type of bullying by a child on the school roll.

In the case of inappropriate use of social networking by parents, the governing body will contact the parent asking them to remove such comments and seek redress through the appropriate channels such as the complaints policy and will send a letter.

The governing body understands that, 'there are circumstances in which police involvement is appropriate. These include where postings have a racist element or where violence is threatened or encouraged.' Furthermore, 'Laws of defamation and privacy still apply to the web and it is unlawful for statements to be written...which:

- expose (*an individual*) to hatred, ridicule or contempt
 - cause (*an individual*) to be shunned or avoided
 - lower (*an individual's*) standing in the estimation of right-thinking members of society or
 - disparage (*an individual in their*) business, trade, office or profession.'
(National Association of Head teachers)
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6. Further Guidance and advice

Cyber bullying: Advice for Head teachers and school staff (DFE)
https://www.google.co.uk/search?hl=en&q=social+media+policy+guidance+schoools&meta=&gws_rd=ssl

NASUWT Advice
http://www.nasuwt.org.uk/InformationandAdvice/Professionalissues/SocialNetworking/NASUWT_007513
